TL 525

AUSTRALIAN COALITION FOR EAST TIMOR

CAMPAIGN FOR AN INDEPENDENT EAST TIMOR
(SOUTH AUSTRALIA)

SA Development Education Centre,
first floor,
155 Pirie St,
ADELAIDE SA 5000
AUSTRALIA

Dear Friends of East Timor,

RE: AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL EAST TIMOR CONFERENCES

On 6-7 June 1992, the Campaign for an Independent East Timor in South Australia hosted two important national conferences on the subject of East Timor at the University of Adelaide.

The first conference held on 6 June was the **National East Timor Activists Conference** which brought together 40 delegates from East Timor political parties, cultural, solidarity and peace groups from around the country. The main aim of this meeting was to improve the coordination of major actions organised by East Timor solidarity groups.

The **East Timor - The Way Forward Public Conference** was held on 7 June and attracted over 70 participants from church, peace, aid, human rights, unions and community groups.

The two conferences indicated that there is an increased concern in Australia about the human rights situation in East Timor following the Santa Cruz massacre and the follow-up trials conducted by the repressive Suharto regime. Both received reports from key representatives from East timorese organisations and were chacterised by lively discussion and debate.

Certainly many Australians are outraged by the supine position that the Australian Government adopts towards the Indonesian Government.

These events of the past 17 years and the fact that the Indonesian military dictatorship is unrepentant about its human rights violations means that all East Timor solidarity groups around the world need to redouble their efforts to support their courageous brothers and sisters in that tiny nation.

The resolution by the US House of Representatives to cut military training to the Indonesian military is an important step in the long process to achieve East Timorese independence and we believe that we must build on that important development.

We have enclosed a summary of the minutes of the Activists Conference and a copy of the resolutions that emerged from the Public Conference so that you may be aware of what actions Australian supporters will be taking in the near future. We are also hopeful that some of the resolutions and ideas adopted at these meetings might be considered as worthy suggestions for other organisations to implement.

Best wishes from East Timor support groups in Australia,
Greetings of solidarity,

Andrew Alcock

Andrew Alcock
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16 July 1992

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RESOLUTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

OF EAST TIMOR ACTIVISTS CONFERENCE

ADELAIDE, 6 JUNE, 1992

- *The conference endorses the proposal of Xanana Gusmao (Chairman of National Council of Maubere Resistence CNRM), for Peace Talks without pre-condition and under United Nations auspices.*

- *The conference supports the "East Timor Talks Campaign" undertaken by the Australian Council for Overseas Aid.*

- *Recommendation is made to:*

    - *pursue relations and networking with Non-Government Organisations and Indonesian organisations supportive to East Timor's rights to self-determination;*

    - *step up activities with Church groups*

    - *initiate the "East Timor Solidarity Collective" to act as a Steering Committee for the organisation of a future National Conference;*

    - *take co-ordinated action on the specific issues of:*

        - *Timor Gap Oil Treaty*

        - *Trials of East Timorese protesters*

        - *Military Training/Co-operation/Aid between Australia and Indonesia*

        - *pressure the Australian Labor Party to send to East Timor, an Investigative Mission, to enquire:*

        - *the identity and fate of 90 missing persons and the true extent of the Santa Cruz massacre;*

        - *Indonesian policy re dissent in E.T. and Indonesia.*

The Conference supports, in principle:

- *the growth in number of Australian visitors to East Timor and the presence of aid organisations;*

- *the production of a petition/letter to the World Court (Hague), expressing opposition to Australian Government policy re Timor Gap Treaty and dejure recognition of Indonesia's annexation of East Timor;*

- *the lobbying of nations with an aid relationship to Indonesia (most notably USA and Japan)*

- *sending letters to Boutros Ghali calling for United Nations to make a more determined effort to bring peace to East Timor;*

- *call upon countries to support East Timor in the United Nations (especially more progressive Third World countries;*

- *The Participation of East Timor representatives in the "Conference of Indigenous Peoples: 500 Years of Colonialism" in Nicaragua, 1993".*

TL0525-2

NATIONAL EAST TIMOR ACTIVISTS CONFERENCE

ADELAIDE, 6 JUNE 1992

REPORTS FROM ACTIVIST DELEGATES

DELEGATES PRESENT

Present were members of C.I.E.T.(S.A.) and the United Committee for the Independence of East Timor (Adelaide); and representatives from FRETILIN committees, N.S.W. & Vic.;the East Timor Cultural Centre, Sydney; the Embassy Group (Canberra); the Australia-East Timor Association (Melbourne); the East Timor Support Committee (Newcastle); Friends Of East Timor (W.A.); and the East Timor Relief Appeal. Also present was Antonio Sampaio, a supporting journalist, for part of the day.

APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Jose Ramos Horta, Flavia Pinto (U.D.T.- Darwin), Pat Walsh (East Timor Talks Campaign - Melbourne), Michael Wagner (C.I.E.T.- Canberra), Anthony Burke (E.T. Talks Campaign - Sydney), Jennie Herrera (Hobart East Timot Committee), Alfredo Ferreira (FRETILIN-Darwin), and from Laurie Ferguson, MHR, Warren Snowdon, MHR, & Peter Duncan, MHR (Parliamentarians for East Timor). Also from Shirley Shackleton, Michelle Turner, Ruth Amber, and Phil Cleary, MHR.

Late apologies were received from U.D.T. (N.S.W.) representatives, Tony Viegas & Celia Martires, and Timorese Australian Council rep., Manuel Viegas (unforeseen circumstances). They arrived in time for the Sunday Public Conference.

REPORT BY THE EAST TIMOR RELIEF APPEAL REPRESENTATIVE

Agio Pereira observed that the solidarity movement has grown markedly since the Dili massacre. He stressed the importance of national unity, ie. of uniting all the East Timorese people against the Occupation. The courage of the young people in East Timor put the lie to Indonesian claims that the next generation would accept Indonesian integration. He pointed to the importance of putting East Timor on T.V. and the use of video.(in partic. the Yorkshire TV team's efforts). ETRA developed out of the new momentum and greater solidarity.

REPORT BY FRETILIN C'TEE (SYDNEY) REPRESENTATIVE

Estanislau de Silva endorsed Xanana Gusmao's peace proposal of negotiations without pre-conditions under U.N. auspices, while holding that the principle of self-determination was still the fundamental issue. He claimed that Abilio Araujo's plan (Oct.'91) was based on Xanana's Peace Proposal, while Ramos Horta had extended it further. According to Xanana, the East Timorese will/have respond(ed) to the Indonesian occupation 'in the best possible way'; the Timorese survived 400 years of Portuguese colonialism: they will survive more than 17 years of Indonesian rule.

REPORT BY FRETILIN C'TEE (MELBOURNE) REPRESENTATIVE

Abel Guterres talked about his recent visit to East Timor. The Timorese don't "mourn" those killed on November 11th, but are "happy" because they died for a reason. November 11 turned East Timorese attitudes around: they no longer accept the status quo. He said Bishop Belo stressed the importance of more visitors going to East Timor; at present there are 12 battalions of Indonesian troops in East Timor (20,000-30,000 soldiers); repression is worse - back to the dark days of the 1980s.

....2./

REPORT BY EAST TIMOR CULTURAL CENTRE (SYDNEY) REPRESENTATIVE

Bernadino Siry reported that they were teaching East Timorese culture to the young people. Whereas previously communication was negative, open discussion and sharing of ideas was promoted. They are also performing to show Australian people that "we are here", and to propogate information.

REPORT BY AUSTRALIA - EAST TIMOR ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE

John Sinnot reported that many AETA people have become involved in the East Timor Talks Campaign, especially after the Dili massacre, subtracting somewhat from AETA work; it was now more normalised as the Talks Campaign has not achieved what it set out to do. He recognised the role of the East Timor Relief Appeal, but believed the solidarity groups had a role to play in ETRA. AETA has been concentrating on its information role and on East Timor publications. AETA endorses the Bishop Belo/Hobart East Timor Committee suggestion for a constant tourist stream to East Timor. He emphasised the great need to criticize the Australian Labor Party, especially after their National Conference compromise by the Left. The Australian Government was working "hand in glove" with Indonesia by actively lobbying U.N. delegates to vote against East Timor initiatives. On the other hand Phil Cleary, Independent MP, supports East Timor and wants to talk to AETA about strategy.

REPORT BY EAST TIMOR SUPPORT COMMITTEE (NEWCASTLE) REPRESENTATIVE

Reverend John Queripel & Jude Niven reported on various activities in Newcastle, such as rallies, film nights, public meetings, and a picket of SHELL oil company. Among suggestions for further action or specific to Newcastle were: presenting a list of demands to the Indonesian Government re the rights of the East Timorese; working with unions to organise a black ban on Indonesian ships in Newcastle harbour; and actions directed against SHELL and B.H.P.

REPORT BY FRIENDS OF EAST TIMOR (W.A.) REPRESENTATIVE

Denis Yuen reported that F.O.E.T. has recently reconstituted itself. He stressed the need for national co-ordination: W.A. feels left out. He suggested a national newsletter.

REPORT BY THE EMBASSY GROUP (CANBERRA) REPRESENTATIVE

Jose Borges reported on the setting up of the East Timor 'Embassy', and then the crosses opposite the Indonesian Embassy. Although the crosses have been removed, legal moves are still afoot to have them returned.

REPORT BY CAMPAIGN FOR INDEPENDENT EAST TIMOR (S.A.) REPRESENTATIVE

Andy Alcock reported that the S.A. committee is made up of approximately half Timorese and half non-Timorese Australians. A Liberal Party Member, Dr. Bernice Pfitzner, M.L.C. was credited with moving a successful resolution through the Legislative Council (Upper House) very supportive of East Timor, in the aftermath of the Dili massacre. The United Trades and Labour Council likewise passed a good resolution, assisted by some union actions. An Independence Dinner and Photo Exhibition (Jenny Groves, et al) Opening were addressed by Emilia Gusmao. Andy also participated in and reported on the Peace Boat Mission to East Timor in March. A very successful Dinner/Cultural Evening, held in May, featured the East Timor Cultural Group from Melbourne as performers.

REPORT BY UNITED COMMITTEE FOR INDEPENDENCE FOR EAST TIMOR (S.A.) REP.

Rui Martins and Victor Godinho reported on the recently formed committee. They want to promote unity between the East Timorese people, and put past differences behind them: they want the East Timorese to be "united as one for independence".

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REPORT BY PAT WALSH, EAST TIMOR TALKS CAMPAIGN (ACFOA HUMAN RIGHTS OFFICE, VIC.)

The meeting received a report from Pat Walsh detailing the activities and recommendations of the East Timor Talks Campaign. The Campaign is to promote talks without preconditions involving all parties, including the resistance, under U.N. auspices. He maintained that the issue will be resolved in the international community, not East Timor or Australia. The talks proposal has been given considerable international airing, and has been adopted as policy by Portugal. He recommended that the Talks proposal be the central focus of all East Timor work in the present opportunity, and made several specific recommendations to this effect. He also highlighted three other key areas of activity: developing support for East Timor in Indonesia; developing Church support and action, locally and internationally, as a top priority; and co-ordinating around the central objective of internationally sponsored talks.

REPORT BY HOBART EAST TIMOR COMMITTEE

The meeting received two recommendations for action from Jennie Herrera. First, to have a roster of 'tourists' constantly applying to enter East Timor, alongside a campaign to get U.N. observers, followed by a U.N. Peacekeeping Force, into East Timor. Secondly, a large petition, Australiawide, to go to the International Court of Justice, expressing Australians' opposition to our Government's recognition of Indonesian sovereignty over East Timor, and their signing of the Timor Gap Treaty.

REPORT BY ANTONIO SAMPAIO (guest journalist)

Antonio Sampaio reported on his participation in the Peace Boat Mission to East Timor, and on Indonesian claims and leaked military documents.

Minuted by Bob Hanney, C.I.E.T.(S.A.)

TL0525-3

RESOLUTIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS

EAST TIMOR - THE WAY FORWARD PUBLIC CONFERENCE

ADELAIDE, 7 JUNE 1992

(in order of presentation)

To Aid Organisations

1. That we encourage Overseas Service Bureau / Australian Volunteers Abroad workers to go to East Timor.
2. That the East Timor Relief Appeal (ETRA) be given status as a special Non-Government Organisation partner for ACFOA members.
3. That links be established with overseas NGOs able to get into East Timor. Eg. Japan.

Issues for Political Action and Priorities

1. That we press the Federal Government to ask the Indonesian Government to agree to the call by Xanana Gusmao (as recorded in 1990) for peace talks without preconditions under the auspices of the United Nations.
2. That we press the Federal Government to recognise that the Australian people are disappointed with the responses to Indonesia's continued travesty of human rights in East Timor.
3. That we press for the opening up of East Timor for visit and report. (Even rejection will have political outcomes)
4. That we send letters to the United Nations (& other relevant bodies) stating that as Australians, we object to the human rights abuses in East Timor.
5. That we press Indonesia to accept the responsibility of clearly identifying the victims of the Santa Cruz tragedy, and of allowing the East Timorese and their friends to bury them with the dignity that they and their family deserve. (NOT IN MASS GRAVES)
6. That military training, co-operation & aid between Australia and Indonesia cease, until Indonesia gets out of East Timor. (As a demand to the Federal Government)
7. That we encourage the growth in the number of Australian visitors to East Timor, and the presence of aid organisations.
8. That we call upon countries to support East Timor in the United Nations (especially more progressive Third World countries).
9. That East Timor representatives participate in the "Conference of Indigenous Peoples: 500 years of Colonialism" in 1992.
10. That we press for a fact-finding mission to go to East Timor.
11. That we call on the Australian International Committee of Jurists to lobby for an inquiry into the different sentences meted out to the Military and the students, and into the legality of the trial itself.

To the National Union of Students

1. Conference recommends NUS carry a resolution:
   (i) Condemning the Indonesian Military Government's continuing violations of U.N. resolutions;
   (ii) Condemning the Indonesian invasion (and sic, illegal occupation) of East Timor;
   (iii) Supporting the right of East Timorese students to demonstrate peacefully, and condemning the heavy (and sic, illegal) sentences being meted out to the East Timorese students while Military personnel are receiving light sentences.

....2./

To the N.U.S. (cont.)

2. Conference also calls on NUS to:
   (i) Develop a comprehensive policy supporting the right of self-determination for the East Timorese people;
   (ii) Lobby the Australian Government to change its policy to a position of support for East Timorese independence and self-determination;
   (iii) Fund the Appeal to support the East Timorese student victims of Indonesian oppression, eg. through E.T.R.A.; and
   (iv) Send copies of resolutions carried to:
   - Indonesian and international student organisations
   - the Australian Government
   - the U.N. General Secretary
   - media outlets.

Conference recommends that other Unions do the same as above.

Re Timor Gap Treaty

1. Conference calls for a campaign against companies engaged in exploration/exploitation of the oil and gas resources in the Timor Gap under the illegal Timor Gap Treaty (1989).

2. Conference endorses the call for a national petition expressing the opposition of the Australian people to their Government's illegal Treaty with Indonesia, and for this petition to be sent to the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

3. Conference demands that the Australian Government never compromise human rights for economic gain.

4. Conference calls upon all East Timorese and E.T. solidarity groups to hold a national day of action of rallies to oppose the Australian Government's collaboration with the Indonesian Military Government, including as a main focus, Australia's involvement in the illegal Timor Gap Treaty.

To Church Groups

1. Conference calls for the re-inauguration of ^ or replacement for Christians in Solidarity with East Timor, and to push its formation through church organisations/papers.

2. That Bishop Belo (Bishop of Dili) be invited to Australia. To this end we approach the Bishop's Conference for Justice and Peace, otherwise the Australian Council of Churches. Other groups to approach: religious orders - Australian Major Religious Superiors, Uniya (Jesuits); Protestant Churches - Anglican dioceses, Uniting Church presbyteries → Synods – Christian Conference of Asia.

3. That we work for statements from these religious groups that commit them to further action, and that these statements be co-ordinated.

4. That we assist East Timorese representatives to get to Ecumenical & Church conferences, i.e. in helping them to receive invitations and then financial assistance.

Further Political Action

1. That, re Portugal's application to the I.C.J. to have the Timor Gap Treaty ruled invalid, we ask groups in Australia to put pressure on the Australian Government by writing letters to M.P.s & oil companies - as Australian citizens, in a national campaign.

....3./

Further Political Action (cont.)

2. That we promote a campaign to work with Indonesian people through their solidarity organisations, NGOs, Aid Groups, Student Movements and others.

3. That we call on Third World countries in the U.N. to support appropriate resolutions on the East Timor conflict. (see also resolution no. 8)

4. That we press the Portuguese Government to take the issue of East Timor to the U.N. General Assembly (following recent discussions on the situation in Yugoslavia), if Indonesia does not respond positively to the 'peace negotiations without pre-conditions' as espoused by Xanana Gusmao.

5. That we put pressure on the Indonesian Government to open up East Timor to outsiders, particularly media and NGOs. (see also resolution no. 3 "Issues for Political Action.....")

6. That we lobby the U.N. to send a team to investigate the Santa Cruz massacre.